

Message Text

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21

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 IO-10 ISO-00 DPW-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SCS-03 /078 W

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R 310720Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3344

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, PFOR, MILI, VS

SUBJ: AMERICAN PRISONERS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

REF: BUDAPEST 1566

1. MAY 30 WIRELESS FILE PROVIDING TEXT OF DEPARTMENTAL SPOKESMAN'S MAY 29 STATEMENT TO WASHINGTON PRESS MOST HELPFUL.

2. HAVING RECEIVED NO REPLY TO MOST RECENT DEMARCHE TO DEPUTY FONMIN RACZ, MCAULIFFE HAS JUST SENT FOLLOWING LETTER TO HIM:

QUOTE DEAR MR. MINISTER: WHEN I CALLED ON YOU ON MAY 23, YOU WILL RECALL THAT WE DISCUSSED THE UNFORTUNATE SITUATION OF THE PRIVATE AMERICAN CITIZENS WHO ARE STILL BEING HELD CAPTIVE IN VIETNAM BY THE AUTHORITIES IN SAIGON, LONG AFTER THE HOSTILITIES IN THAT UNHAPPY COUNTRY HAVE CEASED.

YOU WILL UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE NOTED THAT YESTERDAY IN

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WASHINGTON THE SPOKESMAN OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, MR.

ROBERT FUNSETH, EXPRESSED THE SERIOUS CONCERN OF MY GOVERNMENT ABOUT THE FATE OF THOSE UNITED STATES CITIZENS. MR. FUNSETH'S STATEMENT READS AS FOLLOWS:

"I WISH TO STATE OUR SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT NINE AMERICANS WHO HAVE BEEN HELD BY THE COMMUNIST AUTHORITIES IN SOUTH VIETNAM SINCE BEFORE THE CLOSING OF THE U.S. EMBASSY.

"AMONG THE GROUP ARE SIX MISSIONARIES CAPTURED MARCH 10 AT BAN ME THUOT, SOUTH VIETNAM, WITH A FORD FOUNDATION SCHOLAR, A USAID OFFICIAL, AN AUSTRALIAN TOURIST, AND A CANADIAN MISSIONARY COUPLE.

"IN ADDITION, A U.S. CONSULAR OFFICER ASSIGNED TO NHA TRAN WAS CAPTURED WHEN COMMUNIST FORCES OVERRAN PHAN RANG ON APRIL 16.

"THERE IS WIDE CONCERN ABOUT THESE PERSONS, WHO CONTINUE TO BE HELD LONG AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF OFFICIAL AMERICANS FROM VIETNAM. WE CONSIDER THEIR RELEASE AND SAFE RETURN A MATTER OF URGENT PRIORITY AND CONCERN.

"MOREOVER, ABOUT 2,300 AMERICANS CONTINUE TO REMAIN UNACCOUNTED FOR IN INDOCHINA FROM THE PERIOD BEFORE THE 1973 CEASEFIRE--900 OF THEM (INCLUDING 30 CIVILIANS) STILL LISTED AS MISSING, THE REST DECLARED DEAD WITH THEIR BODIES NOT RECOVERED.

"UNDER THE PARIS AGREEMENT THE COMMUNIST SIDE UNDERTOOK TO HELP ACCOUNT FOR THE MISSINGNKN TO RETURN THE REMAINS OF THE DEAD. PROGRESS ON THIS IS LONG OVERDUE.

"WE CONTINUE TO EXPECT THE COMMUNIST SIDE TO COOPERATE IN RESOLVING THIS HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM."

IT IS MY HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE HUNGARIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC HAS FOUND THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS ITS HUMANITARIAN CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF THESE IMPRISONED CIVILIANS. IT IS MY FURTHER HOPE THAT YOU WILL NOT HESITATE TO COMMUNICATE WITH ME AT ANY HOUR OF THE DAY OR NIGHT IN THE EVENT THAT THE MINISTRY RECEIVES INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR WELFARE OR ABOUT THE DATE ON WHICH THEY WILL BE RELEASED FROM CAPTIVITY.

WITH DEEP THANKS FOR YOUR GENEROUS ASSISTANCE AND WITH WARM BEST WISHES. UNQUOTE
MCAULIFFE
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